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Editorial: On the path to recycling

On Wednesday, the city of Kokomo took yet another important step in its long and oftentimes circuitous path to curbside recycling. According to a story we published Thursday by Tribune reporter Martin Slagter, the city's Board of Public Works and Safety approved the purchase of 7,500 totes at \$50 apiece. Kokomo Parks and Recreation Director Randy Morris said the city was committed to the purchase of 22,500 such totes by the end of the year.

The original plan had the program starting by Labor Day, but that has since been pushed back. Part of the hold-up has to do with private local sorter, Kokomo Recycling, which has been preparing for the extra workload by purchasing a new building and constructing a materials recovery facility. Kokomo Mayor Greg Goodnight said he hopes to have 30 percent of households in the city limits recycling by the end of the year.

This is an extremely worthwhile program, and while delays like this can be frustrating for those chomping at the bit for it to start, it's important to take the time to get it right. Dealing with recycling is more complex than conventional refuse and retrofitting to deal with the increased capacity is essential.

According to the Environmental Protection Agency, the average person generates more than four pounds of trash every day and about 1.5 tons of solid waste per year. And Americans as a whole produce more than 200 million tons of garbage annually. Everywhere you look, local leaders are obviously attempting to make sure Kokomo is ready for the future. One of those components has to involve being open to changing the ways we deal with our waste. And as much as we'd all like it to happen immediately, making sure this program is viable for years to come is paramount.